NAQCC News

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1. FEBRUARY SPRINT: We started out 2011 like we finished 2010 with our 100+ logs sprints. Let's keep the ball rolling now in February. We've had many new members enter our sprints in the run of 10 straight sprints with 100+ logs. Actually if they and our long time regulars would all show up in this month's sprint (Feb 9 at 0130-0330Z - which is Tuesday evening local US time), we could easily surpass the 150 log mark. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be a part of the loud voice shouting, "We love CW!!!". You can if you enter the sprint and send in your log. As I typed that my mind flashed back to some high school pep rallies where the seniors, juniors, and sophomores all competed to see who could shout the loudest. Well, we're not competing against anyone but ourselves. Wouldn't it be nice to keep shouting louder and louder by increasing the number of logs submitted for each sprint. I think it would, and I wouldn't even mind the increased workload involved in cross-checking more and more logs each month.

If you are thinking of entering one of our sprints for the first time, we will certainly welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from then on. We have a nice certificate for the member with the best first-timer score. The best part is that our sprints are very user-friendly to a newcomer to CW or one who is just returning to CW after a long absence. The straight key bonus we give tends to keep the CW speed down in our sprints, and the friendliness and helpfulness of our members manifests itself in a willingness to slow down if necessary to make it easy on the newcomer. Our sprints are a great place to 'get your feet wet' in sprinting/contesting.

Remember to be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

1a. JANUARY 160M SPRINT RESULTS: It looks like our special 160M and mW sprints are starting a streak of their own now with more than 50 logs being submitted. That is just as impressive as 100+ logs for a regular sprint considering that many members don't have setups to run 160M or mW power. We had 54 logs submitted this sprint to go with 63 for our December mW sprint. Amazinly like with the mW sprint, this one also suffered from very poor conditions, yet both were well attended by our wonderful members.Since we don't cross-check logs for our 'special' sprints, we don't have any really detailed stats nor any GOLDEN LOG's, but here is a list of the winners:

AWARDS	
SWA Category	
Division	**Winner**
W1	no entrants
W2	W2SH
W3	KB3AAG
W4	K4ORD
W5	NE9DR
W6	N6DIT
W7	N7KM
W8	K8JD
W9	N9NE
W0	NE0S
Canada	VE3RCN
DX	n/a
Other Categories	
Gain	n/a

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because you have helped show the ham radio world that there are many folks still using and enjoying CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

Very special thanks to those who reported their results even though they made only a few QSO's. Your reports are important also.

2. JANUARY CHALLENGE RESULTS: Our mW challenge looks to be a possible record setter for the number of entries. With still several days remaining until the submission deadline, we already have 13 reports in. We'll have more to say about it in the next newsletter later this month. If you can't wait, keep up with the results as they come in via:

Full Challenge info here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS:

- Because we like to publish our newsletters the last Saturday of a month and the Saturday before our monthly sprint, when the sprint comes early in the month as it does this month, the issues either come just a week apart or we skip one and publish a double issue. Neither way is really all that good a way to do it, so we're thinking of making a change. I think because of the publicity given to our sprints by Dave VA3RJ via his posting of the info to a myriad of sources and the promotional email we send to all members on our mail list the day of the sprint that it is no longer as important to have the Saturday-before-the-sprint issue. So what's the alternative? I think keeping the last Saturdy of the month issue, and then another one two weeks later would work nicely. That two-weeks-later issue would still wind up being a before-the-sprint issue about 9-10 months of the year. When it isn't, we'll promo the sprint in the last-Saturday issue. We'll consider that, and may make the change before long if it is deemed feasible and a good idea.

- You say you love CW, but are not really good enough at it to be participating in our on-air activities yet? Actually some members have said that, and we would like to let you and them know that if that describes your situation, you are still a valuable part of the club. And there are many ways you can help out the club. Let me list a few.

If you have a biography on QRZ.com, be sure to mention you are a NAQCC member and include your member number there.

That also goes for any other source where you talk about ham radio. One great place to put the info is in your email signature when you send a ham-related email. Here is the signature I use for EVERY piece of ham email I send:

```
* John K3WWP - 100% CW / QRP - Proudly promoting Morse Code:
*
* As NAQCC VP - # 0002 FC # 1 - http://naqcc.info/
*
* As FISTS Keynote QRP Columnist - # 2002 - http://www.fists.org/
*
* With my CW-QRP site - http://k3wwp.com/
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Mentions like that many times arouse someone's curiosity and they will visit the club's web site and often become a new member simply because you took a few seconds to mention the NAQCC.

Another good place is on your QSL card. Or on a posting to some email reflector. You get the idea.

Oh, and the above applies to each and every one of our almost 5,400 members. If you do the above, the next time I mention this, I may be able to say something like, 'and that applies to each of our 8,300 members'. Yes, you have the power to attract new members to the club and help us shout all the louder that "CW IS GREAT, AND WE LOVE AND USE IT!"

- We hope you have voted or will vote in our web site poll. The link to vote is on the front page of the web site. This is a feature that is just being established now and we will be having a new poll about once a month or so. We welcome your suggestions for poll questions. They must be questions that lend themselves to a multiple choice selection of answers. No essay questions or questions that ask for your comments on something. There is virtually no limit to the number of answers a question can have. There are two different kinds of polls. One where only one choice can be made like, "How long have you operated CW?", or one that can have multiple answers like, "On which of the following bands have you worked some QRP DX?". I've

had polls on my (K3WWP) personal web site for many years now and each one has drawn K6RF a lot of response. I hope our NAQCC polls will do the same.

- We have added a couple of new awards to our roster. They were designed by Gary K1YAN. We'll be debuting them on or about March 1st. Gary also made a suggestion about modifying one of our current awards a bit. It's the WAS award. Take a look at the new 'Lower 48' category for the award.

- We mentioned this two newsletters ago, and want to give it one more plug now. The QRP ARCI is 50 years old this year. Congratulations on reaching that epic milestone. Here is an item from John NU0V (NAQCC #5346) about the anniversary event:

"This year marks the 50th Anniversary of QRP ARCI. In order to celebrate our golden anniversary, the club is activating the club call K6JSS in each of the 50 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Because of the large response of club members wanting to operate from their state using the K6JSS call, the operating event will now allow multiple operators for each state during their designated week.

Stations participating in the event will coordinate with a state point of contact (POC) for times, bands, modes, etc. to ensure everyone gets a chance to operate as much as possible. Anyone wishing to volunteer to be an operator or point of contact should contact me at nu0v@arrl.net.

There is a full schedule published on the QRP ARCI web site. (Most of the POC stations listed there are NAQCC members also - K3WWP)

Stations using the club call K6JSS will sign /call area where operating. For example, Connecticut's operators would sign K6JSS/1. The recommended exchange is RST and ARCI number (if a member, otherwise use state). Since this is a yearlong event, K6JSS will be active during various contests during the year and will observe the exchange requirements of those contests.

Ed W1RFI is donating 11 ARRL handbooks to be awarded to qualifying individuals working all 50 states. The first Handbook will be given to the first person to work the 50th state. The next 9 will go to the people that worked all 50 states in the least amount of time, starting with 00:00:01 UTC for the start of each state's week-long period. If there are not 10 people that work all states, we'll start with 49 states and work down so all of the handbooks will be awarded. As a bonus, Ed will give another handbook to the person that works K6JSS on the most state/band/mode combinations. Plans are also being made by QRP ARCI to award a special certificate to all qualifying participants, but the details are still being finalized."

- Just a quick reminder we're continuing with the hidden call sign idea originally suggested by Bill KB3XS. Somewhere in this newsletter is a call sign of a member in a place that is definitely out of context and containing a mix of upper and lower case letters. If it is YOUR call sign and YOU find it, email **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET** BEFORE the publication date of the next newsletter (February 26) and win a gift certificate for 100 NAQCC QSL cards produced by the CheapQSLs.com company run by Hal K6RF (#0171) and donated by the NAQCC thanks to your generous monetary donations to the club.

3a. CHAPTER NEWS:

Here is where our club chapters present news about their chapter activities. We currently have three chapters - European, Minnesota, and Texas. We're looking forward to expanding that

roster. Chapters are more or less independent local gatherings organized by members in a geographical area and subject to a list of guidelines under the auspices of the NAQCC. If you would be interested in starting a chapter in your area, let us know and we'll send a copy of the guidelines.

EUROPEAN CHAPTER:

pix_sm_mw3ymy (13K)

Items in this section are from EU Chapter President Matt MW3YMY unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **MATT@MATTIRELAND.CO.UK**
The EU Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcc-eu.org/

MINNESOTA CHAPTER:

pix_sm_wd0k (9K)

The chapter was founded by Bob K9OSC (L).
Questions or comments should go to Chapter President Rich WD0K at pix_email_wd0k .
The MN Chapter web site is at http://www.naqccmn.com/
Items in this section are from Keith K0HJC (R) unless otherwise credited.

TEXAS CHAPTER:

Items in this section are from TX Chapter Director Ron K5DUZ unless otherwise credited.
Questions or comments should go to **WEBMASTER7388@NAQCCTX.COM**
The TX Chapter web site is at http://www.naqcctx.com/

For those that may have missed the last newsletter, the NAQCC Texas Chapter has been formed. Our reason for being is to support the NAQCC in all of its endeavors and to addtionally sponsor related activities at the Texas state level. Our website is now on-line at http://www.naqcctx.com/. All NAQCC members residing in Texas are automatically members of the Texas Chapter.

Our first Chapter activity, the East Texas QRS CW Net, is off to a slow start, which is no great surprise since the news of the net has had so little time to spread. Allen, KA5TJS is the NCS. He says that the band was "long" the first time the net was held and strong out of the area QRM was a problem. We have changed the freq. to 3562.5 KHz +/- QRM, which means that the net will move to the nearest clear spot if QRM is experienced, so please tune around a few KHz to find the net. The second meeting of the net resulted in one check in, which turned into a long rag-chew. Hopefully, the word is beginning to spread and we will have a few more check ins next Monday night.

Please see the net details on our website. We need an alternate NCS for those occasions when Allen is unavailable. If you would like to volunteer for this prestigious job, please e-mail

Allen at his e-mail address listed on the "contacts" page.

Texas is a big state, so if you would like to establish a QRS CW Net in your "neck of the woods" please let us know and we will help you to set it up. We want to encourage members to make contact with other nearby members. We will post notices on our website to facilitate local area activities such as "eyeball QSOs/chuckwagon outings", "QRP to the field/Field Day portable activities", "CW Elmering", "technical assistance", etc. Those of you willing to "Elmer" local hams and prospective hams, please send us your interests and contact information.

I have been in contact with the MN Chapter and we have discussed several possible Inter-Chapter activities. Stay tuned for the details.

Until next time, stay warm, be careful and support your Texas Chapter of the NAQCC by being active with QRP CW!

4. THE NAQCC ELMER PROJECT:

The Elmer project is coordinated by Ron K5DUZ (L). If you are interested in helping out or need help with any CW and/or QRP matters contact: K5DUZ - **NAQCCSKED@FLASH.NET**

No Elmering activity since the last newsletter, but this latest winter storm may have something to do with that. (also the short 1 week turn around between newsletters - K3WWP)

Now back to our discussion of learning and becoming proficient with Morse/CW.

In any endeavor it is helpful to set a goal for which to aim. As a minimum, anyone intending to learn Morse/CW should be aiming to be comfortable copying 15 to 20 words per minute, as that is the speed range in which most CW QSOs are conducted. Achieving this level of competence with the minimum amount of effort involves "learning how to learn". The Koch (pronounced coke) method or a variation of it, the Farnsworth method, are often advocated as the best Morse/CW learning methods.

These two closely related methods emphasize learning each character as a unique SOUND and SUBCONSCIOUSLY correlating that SOUND with the proper alphabetic letter, number or punctuation mark. These two methods involve the sending of characters at speeds typically in the 15 to 20 wpm range, which facilitate learning the unique SOUND of each character. The word speed, which relates to the length of time between the characters, is kept relatively high. In the Koch method the character and word speeds are equal, while the Farnsworth method uses a slower word speed, but not lower than about 13 wpm. These methods force the SUBCONSCIOUS learning of the characters by unique SOUNDs, by not permitting sufficient time for the human brain to decipher the characters into their "dits and dahs".

I, like most old timers, memorized a table of dots and dashes, then began listening to Morse sent at five wpm or even less. I would hear every "dit" and "dah" forming each character, then mentally "look up" the corresponding letter/number/punctuation mark in my mental "look up table" and write down the result. I gradually increased my receiving speed one wpm at a time, until I reached about ten wpm. Around that speed I reached a threshold, beyond which my brain was not fast enough to use the "look up table" method and further increases in copying speed became very difficult. This problem has often been cited as the reason that a high

percentage of Novice class hams were unable to reach the 13 wpm speed required for the General Class code test, particularly during the original one year Novice class license term.

Those Novices that were able to breach the ten wpm barrier were those that had begun to copy characters by their unique SOUNDs, which is the only way that Morse/CW can be copied at the higher speeds. Note that these individuals essentially RELEARNED Morse/CW, this time by character SOUND and once that occurred were free to increase their copying speeds to a really useful level. Note that all of the time spent using the "look up table" method was wasted!

The lesson to be learned here is that Morse/CW can be learned by the unique SOUNDs of the characters from the very beginning of the learning process. Much time and effort can be saved, not to mention the elimination of the frustration encountered while trying to breach the ten wpm level.

Next time I will relate my experience in relearning CW by character sound and discuss how you can do it as well.

Until then, HPE CU SN ON CW! Ron, K5DUZ

If your Elmering needs include CW operating practices you can find good examples on the Elmer Project page of the web site and on K3WWP's Web Site

We need YOU to make our Elmer project work. If you need help with any ham radio matter or are willing to help others with your expertise, please contact our Elmer director at the above email address.

Also see Elmer Project/QRS Nets on the web site.

4a. THE NAQCC QRS Nets:

The NAQCC QRS Net Manager is Brian WB9TPA who will handle all Net related material at this email address: pix email wb9tpa (1K)

Now our NAQCC QRS Nets schedule and activity report (note- no report received for this issue from Brian):

NAQCC QRS Net

Schedule: Sunday evenings local time which is Monday 0000Z on 3562.5 kHz.

Date(UTC) NCS Participants

NAQCC ET Net (East Texas)

Monday evenings local time which is Tuesday 0100Z on 3562.5 kHz.

Date(UTC) NCS Participants

NAQCC PNW QRS Net

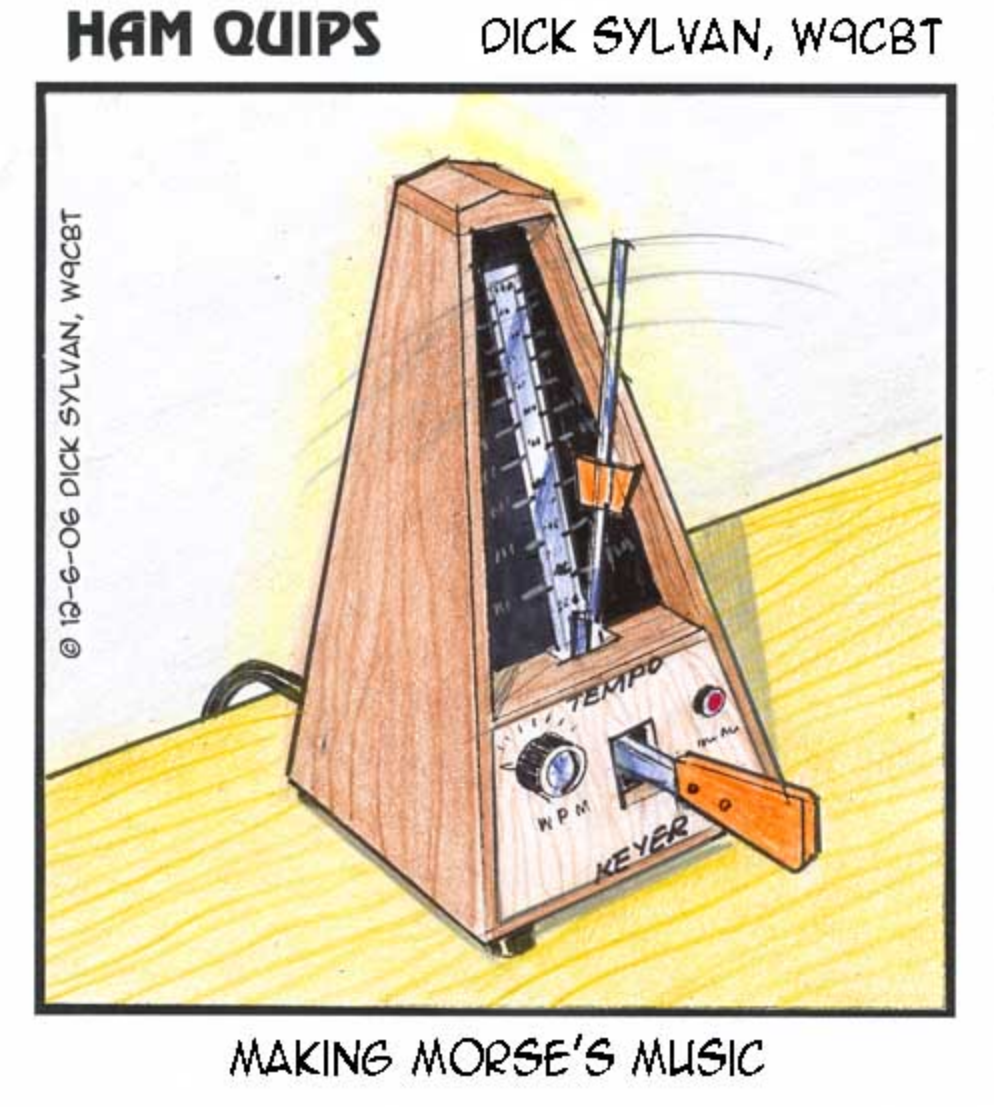
(Pacific NorthWest)
Schedule: Wednesday evenings local time which is Thursday 0200Z on 3575 kHz.

Date(UTC) NCS Participants

For more net info, see Elmer Project/QRS Nets on the web site.

5. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH:

Let's take a comedy and/or nostalgia break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in the K9YA Telegraph, a free ham radio eZine, where he is staff cartoonist. The NAQCC is very honored to reprint Dick's cartoons originally published in the K9YA Telegraph. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters. Dick is NAQCC #2062.



6. MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

This section is managed by Paul N8XMS and any questions about it should go to PAUL142857@GMAIL.COM. Paul selects members at random and asks them if they would like to be featured in the Member Spotlight in the newsletter.

Bill Carter WD4BRP #4708

I was first licensed as a novice in 1977. My first rig was a Swan 350 running about 180 watts on CW. The rig was ok, but not very selective.

My first contact was with a station in Georgia. A 599 signal that was extremely loud. I thought he must be running a high dollar rig with a lot of power. To my surprise he was running a little 6 watt tube transmitter that he made. I thought this must be a fluke or something abnormal.

On another occasion, I had just finished a QSO with an operator in Florida and was sitting back in my chair drinking a cup of coffee. I had my headphones on and I thought I heard a real weak signal.

I made an attempt to contact the station and it was a California station aboard a ship going thru the Panama Canal. He was using a Ten Tec Power Mite running about a watt or two to a vertical antenna on the ships smokestack. Wow a lot of excitement that day!

The young operator was 16 years old and I wondered how can this be? Two watts? A rig that cost $49.00, how can this be? This made me a believer in the power of QRP.

After these contacts I sold my Swan and bought a Heathkit HW-7. This rig was fun but had a very poor receiver. So I replaced it with a HW-8 and I fell in love with the little rig. I made contacts on 80 meters, 40 meters, and 15 meters. What a blast!

The most power I ever ran was 100 watts with a Ten Tec Corsair. There was just no challenge running 100 watts, any thing you could hear you could work.

In my old age, I don't have a lot of money but one thing is certain, I don't need a lot of money to operate QRP and it is very challenging. What a thrill!

7. NEWS ITEMS AND ARTICLES BY OUR MEMBERS:

This section is a forum for you to tell other members what you've been up to on the ham bands or to submit an article dealing with some aspect of CW and QRP operation or equipment. Send your news items and articles to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**. Deadline for submitting news items for the next newsletter is January 27. For your convenience any links in this section will open in a new browser window so you can come immediately back here to the newsletter just by closing that extra window. DISCLAIMER: Any views expressed in this section are those of the member submitting them, and may or may not be those of the NAQCC or its officers.

- **From John K3WWP #0002 -** A lot of you, as you visit my web site, say you like looking at the pictures there. I'm now in the process of changing the presentation of the pictures to a much easier to use (and view) slideshow format. I'd like you to visit my diary page on the site, check out the new slideshows via the link at the top of the page, and let me know what you think. By the time this gets posted I should have just about all of the pictures converted. My site is here

- **From Kevin VE3RCN(Royal Canadian Navy) #4004 -** Have you worked CF3NAVY? Here I am getting permission to open up on CW. Notice the non-sliding CW key tucked away in the bay to the right of the (logging) typewriter. The ship is alongside so the seatbelts for rough weather were not required.

- **From Andrew G7COD #4668 -** I travel to the Maldive Islands at least once per year and have a lot of fun putting on my "one man Dxpedition in a suitcase event" which I combine with my diving holiday. I believe there is only one native 8Q licensee in the Maldives and that station has not been active for a very long time. I am guessing that I am the only NAQCC member to operate from the Maldives but if anybody has operated from there, please contact me at: bev.andy@tiscali.co.uk.

I will be operating from Embudu in the South Male Atoll, Maldives, AS-013, using the call 8Q7AK from 5th February to 18th February 2011. Listen for me on both SSB and CW, on the 80 to 10 metre bands including WARC, everyday from approximately 07:30 to 08:30, 09:00 to 10:30, 13:00 to 1500 and 17:30 to 18:00 UTC. Limited operation on 160m may be possible but is not confirmed.

Spot frequencies to be used are:
3.503, 7.003, 10.103, 14.003, 18.073, 21.003 and 24.893 MHz CW +/- to allow for qrm.

3.793, 7.063, 14.190, 18.133, 21.253 and 24.953 MHz SSB +/- 10KHz to allow for qrm.

As a guide to propagation for eastern seaboard and central NA, I would suggest that NA stations listen on 30m CW between 17:30 and 18:30 UTC as this has been a reliable path to NA. Indeed it would be good to work some NA stations on the key. If we can make the trip QRP, it will be so much the more rewarding. If propagation is poor on the 20m band and does not support SSB contacts, then I will drop down to CW between 13:30 and 15:00 UTC which is when the band is open to NA.

For comprehensive details including QSL information, please check 8Q7AK on QRZ.COM. All QSLs should be sent via the bureau or direct to G7COD. Please note that 8Q7AK is approved for DXCC credit.

- **From Dave VA3RJ #4 and Ryan G5CL #4001 -** The SOC CW Bash - To commemorate the passing of one of its founding members, the Second Class Operators Club will be holding its first 'SOC CW Bash' on Saturday April 2nd between 0000z and 2359z. Many people will remember Hank Kohl, K8DD (NAQCC #21 and SOC #69) as one of the main engines behind QRP ARCI (and one of the earliest to join our foundling NAQCC in October 2004 - K3WWP). Hank was also a professional CW operator and a seasoned contester, so as a fitting tribute, the SOC hopes to combine all aspects of Hank's talents and passions into one event.

Any operator can take part in the 'Bash', and although this is not a contest, the SOC will be issuing its very own special certificates for top scorers in both the QRO and QRP categories. The club hopes to activate all of its own call signs during various times of the 24-hour period - W0SOC, M0SOC, W1SOC AND W5SOC - and although there are no 'strict rules' the format will be roughly as follows:

Time: 0000z to 2359z on Saturday 2nd April (nearest Saturday to April 1st)

Call 'CQ DD' in memory of Hank around the QRP calling frequencies of 3560, 7030 (also check 7040), 14060, 21060, and 28060.

If QRO, please limit power to 100W.

Members exchange membership number, name and RST

Non-members exchange name and RST

Stations worked on different bands will count as separate QSOs. e.g. If you work W0SOC on 80m, 40m and 20m this will count as three points but if you work W0SOC twice on 80m this will only count as one point.

Please submit your scores to Ryan G5CL at RPike78088@btinternet.com by Saturday 16th April (if you solely use QRP, please note this clearly in your email) (and remember to include

your NAQCC number with your scores - K3WWP).

Club email address - **NAQCC33@WINDSTREAM.NET**

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Past on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.